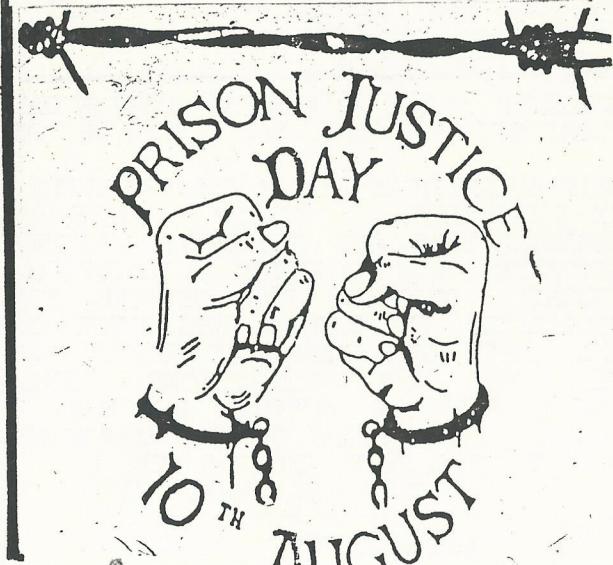


# PRISONERS' JUSTICE DAY

BULLETIN OF THE PJD COMMITTEE OF TORONTO VOL.1 NO. 2 DEC. '93

When Howie Brown wrote to me from the 'hole' in Millhaven Maximum in the summer of 1976 about the panic button (intended to alert guards of an emergency) which had been disconnected, and as a result Eddie Nalon had slashed up and died-and that he and other prisoners were planning to organize a 24 hour fast and work stoppage comes August 10th, little did I realize the far-reaching effects of the idea. Prisoners as far away as Scotland and as near as the United States have been joining us on this special day, holding similar memorial events. Howie wanted to share their grief with us on that first anniversary of Eddie's death, as well as that of another prisoner who had just died in the same way in the same location. Bobbie Landers had just suffered a heart attack and died, unattended and unnecessarily. Little did I realize, in 1976, when Prisoners' Rights Group (PRG) organized about ten people to fast and sleep overnight around the monument at the B.C. Pen, that it would be just the first of many other nation-wide groups doing their 'August 10th' over the years. As one old-timer quietly confided in our closed visit three days later "It felt so good knowing you were all out there ALL NIGHT. It was almost like being free again" In those days, visiting consisted of talking through a [monitored] telephone and peering through at each other at a glass window. No such thing as OPEN visits. It took several more years of persistence, before then Commissioner Andre Theirrien officially declared that prisoners could pass August 10th in this manner without incurring punitive reactions

from the Administration. A day's pay to be withheld for the day not worked. But, some prisoners are still penalized as some wardens still refuse to heed the Commissioner. Last August 10th, [ '92] in addition to other demonstrations held elsewhere, Kathy Yearwood, a devoted friend of prisoners, laid a wreath at the gates of Edmonton Max - an inspiring idea to be repeated at other prison gates this year. It has been often said that prisons are a microcosm of the world around us. In these days of devastating unemployment, in a land where a million children live below the poverty line, in families struggling to subsist on underpaid jobs or social assistance, creating shocking numbers of suicides amongst our young people, it is no wonder that tensions are steadily mounting INSIDE as well as OUTSIDE. However, since we cannot live without hope, as August



10th rolls around again, this particular area of solidarity does provide us with some hope that the world can move forward with a measure of sanity, for everyone, everywhere. As a prison activist of many years, nothing gives me a greater sense of pride than having been able to help Howie, seventeen years ago to realize his very special dream that on every August 10th, Eddie's death - and of so many, too many - are remembered and honoured. August 10th is our day. No one can take it away from us.

prepared by Claire Culhane: Prisoners' Rights Group, May 22/93.

### FEEL FOR SOMEONE

Today is Prisoners' Justice day  
A day to bow and maybe pray,  
A day to remember why it was started  
For our fellow inmates who've departed.

For those who've passed and those neglected,

Feelings hurt, opinions rejected.  
By places that leave many scars,  
Where there's nothing to hold onto but cold bars.

All dreams feel so far away,  
Memories never leave, they just stay.  
Haunting many who never forget,  
The sadness and hurt they have met.  
May this day bring hope to a person's life,

To a Friend, husband or wife.

Just remember one day of the year,  
Bow your head and maybe shed a tear.  
by Melanie Williams, Metro West Detention Cntre.

BULLETIN OF THE PRISONERS' JUSTICE DAY COMMITTEE OF TORONTO VOL.1 NO.2 DEC 93

THIS BULLETIN IS BY AND FOR PRISONERS, EX-PRISONERS, THEIR SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS AND PRISONERS' RIGHTS ADVOCATES. OUR DIRECTION IS TO INFORM, EDUCATE, ORGANIZE AND NETWORK FOR SOLIDARITY IN COMMON RESISTANCE ON AUG. 10TH EACH YEAR. WE KINDLY ASK THAT YOU SEND SUBMISSIONS (NEWS, VIEWS, ARTICLES, STORIES & POEMS) & DONATIONS OF STAMPS OR WELL CONCEALED CASH TO: PJD CMTE. BOX 238 STN. B TORONTO, ON, CANADA M5T2W1

### WHAT IS PRISONERS' JUSTICE DAY?

Traditionally, August 10th has been commemorated by federal prisoners in Canada as Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD). During the twenty-four hours of PJD, prisoners refuse to work and eat in a show of resistance and solidarity in memory of those who have died unnatural deaths in prisons - victims of suicide, murder and neglect. PJD has also been a day when individuals and organizations in the community hold demonstrations, services and vigils in support of prisoners' common resistance against the prison system and its oppressive nature. August 10th has also been a day when public awareness of the brutal and inhumane conditions responsible for senseless prison deaths is raised by prisoners and their support organizations. Moreover, PJD is the day to remember that, while many people are sent to prisons to serve time, none of them have been sent there to die.

PJD is also a day when prisoners and their supporters emphasize publicity of their long list of demands. A general overview of that list includes:

- \*no reinstatement of the death penalty in canada and its abolition elsewhere
- \*to hold all justice system personnel accountable for harassment, deprivation and violent treatment of prisoners

- \*an end to extreme measures such as solitary confinement and special handling units or control units for prison organizers

- \*allowing of prisoner peer, education and support groups

- \*a healing model of justice, connecting people to crimes, helping offenders take responsibility for their actions through restorative justice methods

PJD has come to mean a lot of different things to many different people. In any regard, it is an international day of solidarity to remember those who have died within the confines of barbed-wire, concrete, steel and prejudice.

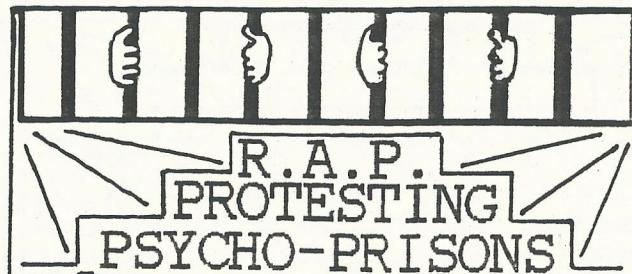


PLEASE REPRINT & DISTRIBUTE

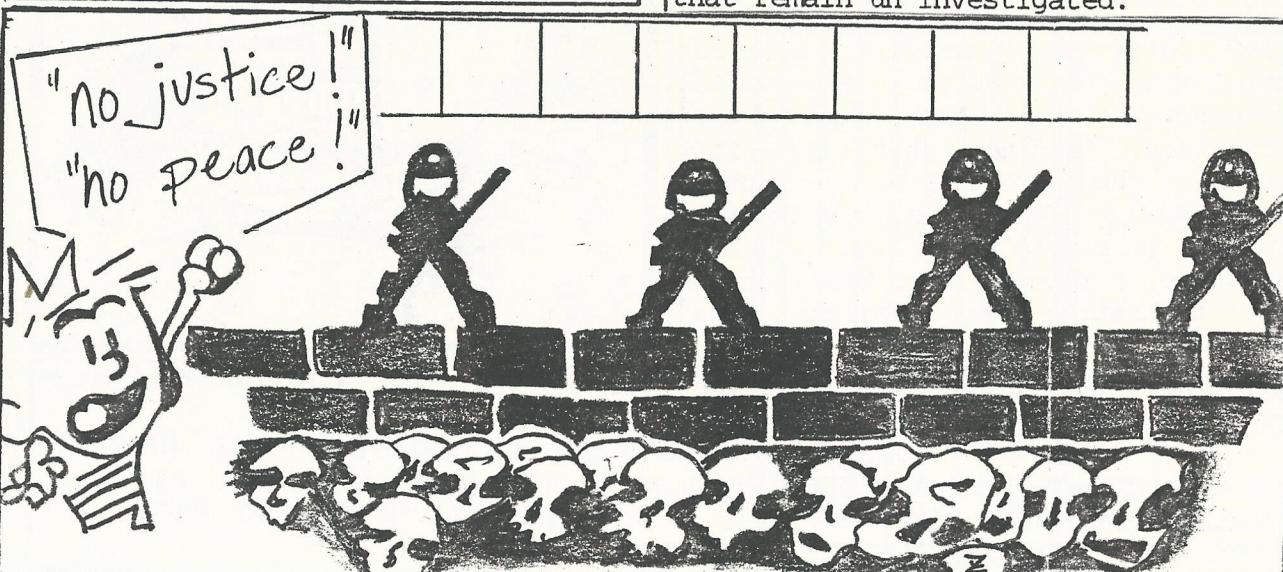
## DEATH BEHIND BARS

An Epidemic of Suicide in Mississippi Jails-or is it murder?

Jails are places of despair and danger, and even prisoners with short sentences do not always get out alive. But that hardly explains a strange string of deaths in Mississippi. During the past six years, 47 men, 24 of them black, have left local jails in body bags. In all but one case, authorities said the men had hanged themselves in their cells. After listening to testimony last week from relatives of some of these prisoners, Bobby Doctor, the interim chairperson of the Civil Rights Commission, called for a federal inquiry into the deaths. No one has yet presented proof that any of the prisoners were killed by authorities, but there were plenty of suspicious cases. Last year, Andre Jones, 18, was brought into the Simpson County Jail in Mendenhall. That night, Jones hanged himself with his own shoelace, police said. Jones' parents, however, claimed he was murdered. They said he was scheduled to leave for college the next day, something he looked forward to for a long time.



About 40 people participated in a demonstration at the Queen St. mental Health Cntr. at noon on Aug. 10/93. The Toronto group, Resistance Against Psychiatry (RAP) organized the protest against the "damaging and imprisoning of people by psychiatry". They see the psychiatric system and the criminal injustice system as mutually reinforcing approaches that the state uses to control human beings. They recognize that classicism, racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism and ableism are all implicated in psychiatric oppression. They focus on anti-psychiatry activities while highlighting the connection among oppressions. Significant in their activism is the raising of public awareness of brutality by staff committed in the name of treatment and the many deaths inside psycho-prisons that remain un-investigated.



## PASAN

## DEMONSTRATION

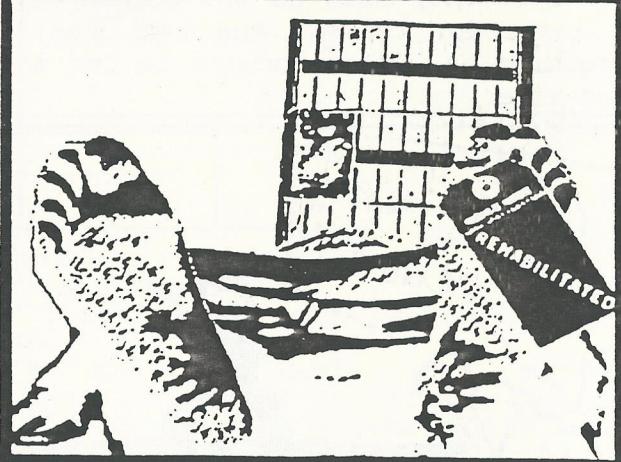
One of a long list of demands made by prisoners that are emphasized on PJD is that prison administrators and policy makers adequately address the crisis of HIV/AIDS. For nearly ten years, various community organizations have been lobbying for effective education, treatment and preventive methods for HIV/AIDS in prisons. One group, the PRISONERS with AID SUPPORT ACTION NETWORK (PASAN), held a demonstration in solidarity with the PJD Committee of Toronto on Aug. 7/93 outside the Toronto Jail. While condoms are soon to be introduced in Ontario jails, and they have been available to federal prisoners in Canada since January '92, other related issues remain unattended and the governments lag behind in other necessary policies. A couple of dozen activists protested the government inaction. "The government says only 20 or 30 people in the jails are HIV positive, but among us we know many more. They seem to have no grasp of the size of the problem," said Heddema, a lawyer and member of PASAN. "They seem to think it's too controversial" Julia Barnnett, spokesperson for PASAN, told the protestors, adding that by its inaction, the "governments contribute to spreading HIV and shortening the lives of prisoners".

Meanwhile, prisoners have taken their own initiative to address the problems.

More than 100 HIV+ prisoners at the California Medical facility in Vacaville entered their second week of medications strike in Nov. '92 to pressure the prison administration to remedy long-standing problems with medical care which endanger prisoners lives. Six prisoners had died in less than one week and many more followed the actions. ACTUP/San Fransisco picketed the facility in support of the striking prisoners.

This is only an example of one initiative by prisoners world-wide, fighting to end the needless premature deaths of prisoners with HIV/AIDS. It has been noted that a person living with HIV/AIDS in prison will most likely only live half as long as one who is living with HIV/AIDS in the community.

## PRISONERS WITH AIDS HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE



### PRIISON IS ALL PART OF AGAINST WOMEN

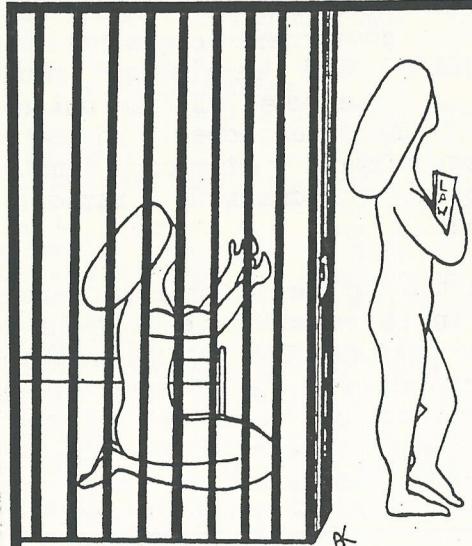
"WOMEN'S COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD NEED TO EDUCATE THEMSELVES SO THAT WHEN A SISTER EMERGES [FROM PRISON]-SCARED, CONFUSED, HURTING AND ANGRY-SHE WILL NOT FIND WALLS-BUT SAFETY AND UNDERSTANDING" - J.R.

# DESPITE PRISONS

Peer support/education groups among prisoners with HIV/AIDS in such places as Dorchester and Mission federal prisons in Canada, and the notorious Max Unit for Women at FCI Marianna have been working, based on the model of the Bedford Hills initiative. In July '93, political prisoner Laura Whitehorn wrote to the PJD Cmte. Toronto from Marianna, saying that, "I would love to be included in PJD, even though it is not yet an event here in the U.S. of K.K.K. Please convey my solidarity and unity with all the women in Canadian prisons. There are four of us political prisoners here: Silvia Baraldini, Marilyn Buck, Susan Rosenberg and me. One thing we consistently do is AIDS support and education. Women with HIV are utterly ignored by the society as a whole-imagine how much that is magnified by being a woman with HIV in prison. And both prison and women with HIV, as "issues" are effected by racism, because so many women in prison with HIV are New Afrikans. It is very important for people on the outside to be conscious of the fact that AIDS affects prisoners, because it is much harder to fight inside for decent treatment and health care if there isn't support from the outside. The AIDS activist movement outside has been so effective because it has been able to gather and focus anger on the government and the medical establishment. Expressing that anger always involves risk-the stronger the movement, the more it is worth it to take the risk. Inside where people (medical staff included) are both more isolated and more completely at the "mercy" of those in power, the risk of fighting for what you need is a much bigger. Support from the outside makes a life-or-death difference. All our AIDS work has been made possible by that support. We need the AIDS movement to take up the demand to release all HIV+ prisoners. We were excited to see that was a demand raised by the Red Army Faction in their recent wonderful action against the high-tech prison at Weiterstadt, Germany.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 A list of those who committed suicide in British Columbia provincial custody from 1970-80 contained 35 prisoners. "Barbarities in the prison are not due directly to the personages of the keepers and/or kept, but to the structure of authority which endows ordinary individuals with absolute power over others. The insidiousness of the prison power relationship was uncloaked in Zimbardo's 1981 Stanford University experiment, but the findings never made the front pages of the daily newspapers. Prison authorities are accountable to no one but their own and are therefore safe to fuel their insatiable lust for power and control. When the extremes of power imbalances between people are reached, power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. I can think of no world as unworldly as this-the chilling world of the deadened and the dying in Canadian prisons.... For a woman like myself, it is loss of all normal recreation, socialization, pass programs and transfer to lower security. Additionally, because I am a woman challenging a patriarchal, militaristic, hierachal "system", the male egos dripping from the persons of the men at the top are incensed. The idea of a mere woman standing for her rights as a person brings constant and pervasive ritualistic repercussions which attack my personality under the mask of "protection". Gayle Horri

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"It might be well for you to remember that the Native people of this land lived here for hundreds of thousands of years, millions of people, without prisons and prison guards, without police and lawyers and without judges. Because we knew how to live then and we still know how to live now..." Art Solomon, Ojibwa Elder

### THE POLITICS OF PRISONS

Ever since the invasion of Columbus, north american Natives have been increasingly oppressed. The statistics of their disproportionate numbers in the iron houses is proof of this. It is a reflection of state and judicial racism. In recent times, there have been demands for change to end the 500 years of abuse of all Natives. The struggles of Natives in the prison is an urgent one, calling for their basic human and civil rights to not be discriminated against by a racist justice system, as well as rights to practice spirituality and meet in cultural groups.

We only have to look at the cases of Donald Marshall and Leonard Peltier to understand just how integral racism is. Natives have been calling for their right to self determination through sovereignty and resistance to this has been evident in the actions of such government organizations as COINTELPRO and repressive measures such as the use of isolation and control units, especially in the cases of organizers, educators and the politically conscious inside the prisons.

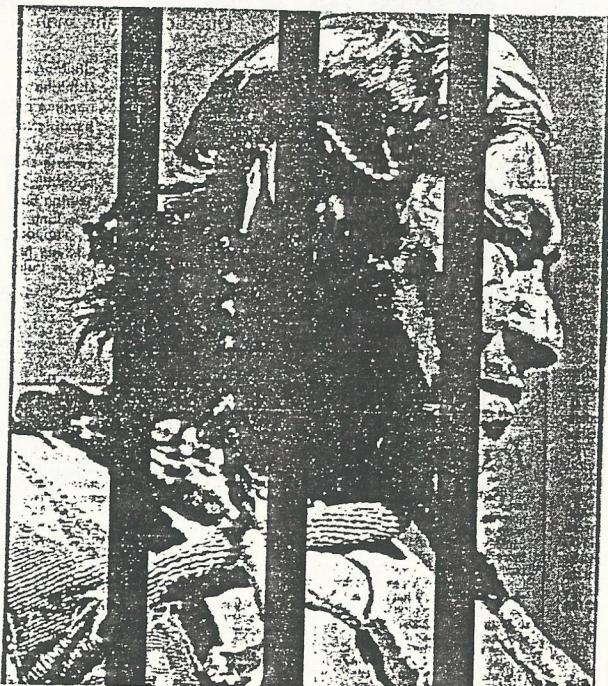
While the Native suicide rate is very high in the communities, it is worse in the prisons. The Native Brotherhood of Drumheller, (a federal gulag in western canada) reported to the PJD CMTE. with several names of Native prisoners who had died there and at Edmonton Max in the past year. Their

Summer Issue '93 of Arrows To Freedom Newsletter was dedicated in memory of Ronald James Redcrow who passed on May 26/93 at Drumheller. He had served as Vice-Chief for the NEH in '92, was known for his wit, laughter, kind-heartedness and his courage to stand firm in what he believed in.

The Native Brotherhood at Dorchester also sent a letter expressing their solidarity on PJD, in memory of the sisters who had died at the notorious Prison For Women. Laura Whitehorn at FCI Marianna in Florida, also wanted to "express solidarity and support for the Native struggles" [in canada].

**"IT IS NOT A NEW DEVELOPMENT FOR WHITE SOCIETY TO STEAL FROM NON-WHITE PEOPLES. WHEN WHITE SOCIETY SUCCEEDS, IT IS CALLED COLONIALISM. WHEN WHITE SOCIETY'S EFFORTS TO COLONIZE PEOPLE ARE MET WITH RESISTANCE, IT IS CALLED WAR. BUT WHEN THE COLONIZED INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA MEET TO STAND AND RESIST, WE ARE CALLED CRIMINALS."**

**WORDS OF TRUTH  
BY LEONARD PELTIER**



## PJD IS ALL ABOUT SOLIDARITY

GEORGE JACKSON, a primary figure of the prison liberation movement was assassinated by guards at San Quentin Prison on August 21, 1971. He had been a Field Marshal of the Black Panther Party when he wrote of unitarian conduct in his published prison letters, Soledad Brother. "Towards A United Front speaks of the urgency in "finding something common" in the struggle to reject hierarchy and calls for a physical response to the systemic violence of the state which uses prisons as one of its means of repression. The common resistance of prisoners on Prisoners' Justice Day is symbolic of unitarian conduct that Jackson wrote about. While PJD has come to mean many different things to many different people, it is always a general show of solidarity among prisoners in resistance. It gives a tremendous boost to people engaged in acts of resistance that others are aware of their struggles. This allows others to also act out in solidarity and others' presence means a support for their resistance. Isolated resistance is simply not the same, nor is resistance in small groups as when you know that there is a large group backing and sustaining you. It doesn't matter that you cannot see each other or communicate. It is enough to know that they are there, in the same prison, or another one, or among the groups of people in the community holding demonstrations, vigils and services. It is as though you have sent out roots and were connected underground in an act of solidarity. It gives life, spirit and energy to those involved in prisoner struggles both inside and outside prisons. Each act, whether isolated or in the public eye adds to our common struggle toward a united front in breaking down the prison walls and systemic oppression.

"What is clear to me...is that no matter how much litigation and legislation is filed and defiled, the road to building a prisoners' movement is paved with solidarity. Irrespective of individual differences and group affiliations, we all have a common bond on which to stand. Solidarity is our greatest weapon, bar none."

Ray Luc Levasseur, USP Marion

## WOMEN SPEAK OUT AGAINST PRISONS

On August 9th '93, the Coalition of All Types of Women Against Criminal Systems (CATWACS) held a "speak out" by five women ex-prisoners at a community centre on the lakeshore in West Toronto. The women spoke out against the lack of medical attention, mental and physical abuse, hopelessness, the lack of access to education, racism, and many other problems and abuses in the prisons. Following is some of what they said. There are a mixture of references to provincial and federal prisons and the statements are a composite of remarks by several of the speakers.

"There is manipulation by the administration using racism between the Black and white prisoners. The doctor wouldn't come when JC, who is Black, was bleeding and miscarrying. There were two Spanish sisters. One of them died. The administration had refused to look at her. The medical care is terrible. MF was suffering heroin withdrawal for three days and couldn't move. But they didn't take her to the hospital. The women had to help JR when she had seizures because there were no medical staff or guards to help".

"The system makes people feel there is no reason to live. Jail is not the place to get the help you need. People inside there need help, education and healthcare. Prison doesn't do anyone any good. It's only good to keep the keepers in jobs. The family suffers the worst. It's a trauma for the children and the parents of the prisoner. It's revenge, not correcting the problems the person had. And it doesn't deter anyone".

"Anyone can commit a crime under the right circumstances. The main punishment is humiliation that goes on for years. There's no help for it, just ridicule. The more you express your true feelings, the more they are used against you. Metro West Detention Centre is filthy. Men look at you in the showers. You have no dignity. The guards are trained to dehumanize you, strip you of your pride and dignity. Some Correctional Officers go in with the intention of changing the system but they become bitter and disillusioned. The nice ones get fired. The others don't want to lose their jobs so they capitulate. CATWACS hopes to continue meeting as a support and advocacy group of former prisoners and their supporters. CATWACS can be reached through the PJD Committee.

## ON THE INSIDE &amp; ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE WALLS ON PJD

On August 10th, '93, the inmates at Dorchester Penitentiary in new Brunswick fasted and stayed in their cells for the day. Unfortunately, not everyone participated. The majority of those who did participate were older inmates who are much more familiar with the meaning of Prisoners' Justice Day and what it represents.

About a week prior to Aug. 10, a PJD bulletin was put up on every range so everyone was aware of the coming date. But when the day arrived many inmates forgot what they had read, and it was business as usual. This prison has an excellent communications system as evidenced by the way rumours are spread. However, on Aug. 10th, there appeared to be a breakdown in communications. This should not happen.

The inmates conducted themselves most appropriately, but the Security [staff] did not. All inmates who refrained from going to work were locked in their cells by the guards. It is evident that an attitude adjustment is in order.

The day ended on a very positive note with the usual Fellowship Service in the Chapel. Next year should be better than this year if we improve our communication, encourage more inmate participation, and become better organized. *Roy Johnson: Dorchester*

At Pittsburgh Minimum Security Inst. in Kingston, Ontario, the entire prisoner population refused to go to work. Several did willingly cook for those who were unable to fast for health reasons, and a couple went to feed the livestock in the barns, but on the whole, PJD was a great success with all joining in that could in the fast.

A quickly organized demonstration, by the Prisoners' Rights Group (PRG) was held on Oct. 29/93 at noon across the street from the offices of the Director of Public Safety. This was planned to add our protest to that of those holding a vigil in Kingston the previous day, about the killing, by guards, of prisoner Robert Gentles at the Kingston Penitentiary. After being heavily maced, this Black Prisoner was dragged from his cell with his arms cuffed behind his back and his legs in irons. Dropped on a stairwell, he skidded down two or three steps. The dozen or so protestors carried placards reading: STOP GUARDS FROM KILLING PRISONERS, DEMAND FULL PUBLIC ENQUIRY. The also distributed about a hundred copies of a news report about the killing. Carmeta Gentles still has not been permitted to view the body of her son at the Hamilton, Ontario morgue.

While there are direct reports of PJD events from some sources, in other cases it is only known by the editors that events did occur. It is necessary to make mention of them all as they are noteworthy and perhaps in the future, we can report from direct accounts.

On Saturday, Aug. 7th, there were two PJD benefit concerts, Rock Against Prisons at Grandview Park in Vancouver and one in Toronto. About 50-60 people attending the concert in Toronto that featured Project 9 and others.

The Women's Rock Against Prisons Band did a painting of 405 names of those who died across Canada in the past 10 years.

At the same time that a great show of solidarity was shown by fasting and striking prisoners in the many prisons in Canada, the PRISON RIGHTS GROUP hosted a rally and wreath-laying at the Vancouver Pre-Trial centre. Kathy Yearwood and other supporters again acted out in civil disobedience in laying a wreath by the wall at Edmonton Max.

In the U.S. gulags, some prisoners that the PJD Comte of Toronto has been in contact with suffered reprisals for attempting to organize strikes and fasting in prisons they are serving time at. The reprisals meant spending lengthy periods in segregation as this type of organizing constitutes "inciting to riot" by prisoncrats. Future issues of this bulletin will report on who they are as well as publish facts around their cases. Direct contact is near impossible at this time.

In Sudbury, Ontario, the prisoner advocacy group, the John Howard Society planted a tree in memory of prisoners who have died unnecessarily.

## SWAN DIVE

Satisfaction could not find you  
 Words would not save,  
 In your final days of pain  
 Prior to meeting thy grave.  
 We tilted tin cups before  
 You took final dive.  
 Watching your graceful flight,  
 Yet finding no more life.  
 Guards gave us stares,  
 Warden gave us yells,  
 We gave final silent words,  
 As you left from this hell.  
 Many fail to trully comprehend  
 Why one must die as you  
 And many cannot feel it,  
 Living as we do,  
 But, diver, I feel your pain.  
 I feel it thru and thru,  
 I seen it in my mirror,  
 For mine is still the same.  
 Yes I fully understand it,  
 Why you took a final dive,  
 For the reflection of one's part.  
 Devour many alive.  
 So soar on, remebered swan  
 Over land, river and sea.  
 Soar through God's blue heaven.  
 For, at least you are free.

*MICHAEL BOWDEN: INDIANA STATE PRISON*



## PJD RADIO

As in past years, community radio throughout Canada and the U.S.A. devoted air time to programs concerning prisoners' struggles and injustice issues during the days prior to and on Aug. 10th. Although far from a complete list, some of the stations contacted that did programming were: CIUT-FM of Toronto, CJKL-FM of Toronto, CHRY-FM of York University, CFRU-FM of University of Guelph, CKGU-FM of Carlton University, CRDU-FM of Dalhousie University, CFUV-FM of University of Victoria, CFMU-FM of McGill University.

## ABC DEMONSTRATIONS

Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) groups in England held demonstrations on PJD to raise awareness of the many deaths in England's prisons-160 since 1990. One particular case they had been publicizing was the death of Omasase Lumumba, who died while being "restrained" by guards. A second inquest concluded that Lumumba had been killed by "improper methods and excessive force" in October '91 at Pentonville.

## LONDON: PENTONVILLE PRISON

A demonstration on August 10th '93 of fifty people, including members of the London A.B.C., Findland A.B.C., London Greenpeace, Anarchist Communist Federation, several ex-prisoners, and the mother of Nicholas Donnelly who hung himself in Pentonville in March 1992 while on remand. The demonstrators displayed placards listing the names of prisoners who had died in Pentonville, as well as general slogans against prison deaths and brutality. Holding other banners as well, they harangued the prison through a megaphone. They handed out over 400 leaflets and talked to many passersby during the rushhour on the main road. It was not a loud or angry demo, "so much as respectful of the dead". It was a great success and many new contacts were made among demonstrators and supporters.

## LEEDS: ARMLEY PRISON

Members of the Sheffield, Huddersfield, and Manchester A.B.C. groups were joined by a group of youngsters to demonstrate outside Armley jail, a nationally renowned hellhole, known for 13 suicides in the past few years. Although the turnout was not large, they displayed various banners, did a lot of leafleting and got the message across to "close the jail down" to motorists on a local highway.

## BIRMINGHAM: WINSON GREEN PRISON

The Birmingham A.B.C. and members of various prison support campaigns (including ex-prisoners and prisoners families) made up the forty or so demonstrators outside this prison. There were plenty of banners and a good response that was reported on the radio and picked up by local television media.

There are many **PUBLICATIONS** produced by prisoners, ex-prisoners, their support organizations and the alternative press. A host of these published articles and briefs about Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD) and certainly deserve mention.

**KICK IT OVER:** anti-authoritarian, anarchist, revolutionary news and views produced by a Toronto collective contained an article, What IS PJD? issue #31.

**THE KEY:** newsletter of the League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners, a Seattle group of activists advocating the human rights of gay and lesbian prisoners, creating a support network and publicizing related issues such as HIV/AIDS in prisons.

**OUT OF TIME:** June '93 newsletter of the Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners contained a notice of PJD and included an address for interested writers to send poetry, writing and music for an Aug. 10 radio show by the PJD:Committee, Toronto.

**BEAG INIS:** Free newsletter of a Montreal collective focusing on international justice/prison issues. The June '93 issue publicized PJD, giving the reasoning behind the event.

**WIND CHILL FACTOR:** Free 'zine of the Chicago "Conspiracy" is anarchist, autonomous, anti-authoritarian in content, process and (dis) organization". Their '93 issue contained an A.B.C. section which featured an awareness notice of PJD.

**PRISON LEGAL NEWS:** A monthly newsletter by two Washington prisoners. While focusing on legal issues affecting prisoners, it is also a source of news and analysis. Their June '93 issue contained an article to encourage the observance of PJD.

**PRISON NEWS SERVICE:** a bi-monthly tabloid of the Bulldozer collective, Toronto. A source of international news & views of anti-imperialist,

anti-authoritarian, revolutionary and prisoners' struggles. Has for several years publicized PJD with articles, and notices.

**HUMAN RIGHTS HELD HOSTAGE:** A newsletter by and for Indiana prisoners. Intended to aid in the theoretical development of resistance and solidarity among prisoners and to inform non-prisoners about prison issues. The second issue in '93 publicized PJD.

**A.B.C. LONDON BULLETIN:** Anarchist bulletin focusing on prison, injustice, class war, struggles, publicizing actions, news & views of local & international significance. The bulletin has been publicizing PJD and calling people to action.

**COALITION OF PRISONERS' RIGHTS NEWSLETTER:** Monthly information sheet of New Mexico coalition to publicize prison/injustice issues focusing on info and news about the Bureau of Prisons, the death penalty and anything affecting prisoners. The July '93 issue noted their solidarity with Canadian prisoners on PJD.

#### PERSPECTIVES ON DEATH & DYING #1

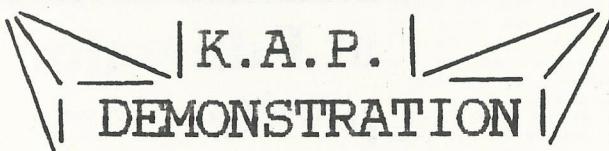
I lived for thousand and thousands of years as a rock and then I became a plant.

I lived for thousands and thousands of years as a plant and then I became an animal.

I lived for thousands and thousands of years as an animal and then I became a human being.

My question to you is ... what have I ever lost by dying?

**THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS PRISON JUSTICE. THEREFORE WE MUST SEEK PRISONERS' JUSTICE. PEOPLE DO NOT WILLINGLY GO TO PRISON, SO THEY ARE NOT INMATES BUT PRISONERS. WE ARE ALL PRISONERS UNTIL ALL ARE FREE. REMEMBER AUG. 10TH EACH YEAR AS INTRNTNL PRISONERS' JUSTICE DAY**



# K.A.P.

## DEMONSTRATION

The names came slowly, one after another, as a group of people gathered for a candlelight vigil took turns reading aloud the names of the 366 prisoners who have died in federal prisons during the past decade. About twenty people gathered at Frontenac County Courthouse during the evening of Aug. 10/93 to commemorate PJD. In what organizer Cheryl White, of the Kingston AIDS Project, called "voices on the inside read by people on the outside" the group read poetry written by prisoners before marching down King Street to the regional headquarters of the Correctional Services Canada in Kingston, Ontario. For Jerry Page, PJD has special significance. While in prison in 1985, he found his best friend, a fellow prisoner, dead. He said that the event was for "showing respect" and remembering those not just in Canada, but all over the world who have passed away in prison, by their own hand, by that of fellow prisoners or by the people in charge. One young offender said he was "here to pay tribute" to those who have died in prison, taking part for the first time in PJD. Part of the day's goal was to focus on the need for prison reform. Rally participant Gerry Page said the prison system could be improved if there was a "better understanding between the system and the people within it. There are lots of people inside who are sincere, who want to change their lives" said Page. John Rives said that events like PJD are key to prison reform. Rives, a published poet service time for murder before being released on parole. "The events show prisoners as people with

### JUST 13 STEPS FROM ETERNITY

I'D LIKE TO BE THERE  
YOU AND ME  
TO TAKE YOUR HAND  
AND WALK YOU BACK  
BUT THAT'S THE MAGIC  
THAT I LACK.  
I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING  
I COULD DO  
TO MAKE IT BETTER  
AND EASIER ON YOU.  
TO TOUCH YOUR FACE  
WITH A SMILE  
FOR THAT I'D WALK A MILE.  
IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN  
FOR YOU I CARE  
AND THEY CAN SHOVE  
THEIR ELECTRIC CHAIR.

*Dedicated to the memory of  
Roger Coleman, electrocuted in  
Virginia. by JANICE SNOW*

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In surveying South Africa, it was found that the number of suspicious deaths of prisoners and in other custody during 1992 was 121. The number of prisoners under death penalty is 400. One main cause of death among two is "security force extra-judicial killings".



feelings. They're just ordinary people who happen to be behind bars," he said. "People can see them as human beings." Rives said that once prisoners are seen as real people, real solutions can be found to the problems in the prison systems. White said "there are alternatives to incarceration" that should be explored.

# Remembering inmates who died in jail

Mountie's killer found dead in cell

STONY MOUNTAIN, Man. (CP) — A prisoner serving a life sentence for killing an RCMP officer in 1986 was found dead in his cell on the weekend. Stony Mountain Penitentiary officials identified him as Edgar Olson, 53, a native of Manitoba. Cause of death was not immediately

# Dyer desp By Barb TOR A woman cer is being judge's rec she be mov lau says rd d ing South Africa urity force extra-judicial killings deaths in custody in 1992: 121 der death sentence in 1992: 400

An internal probe launched into the death of a prisoner at federal prison in Ontario lacks public credibility says a top advocate for ex-prisoners. Three Correctional Service employees are examining the death of Robert Gentles, who died after he was maced by guards while being removed from his cell Oct. 24/93. The prisoner's death during a prison-wide search for weapons and drugs has sparked allegations by prisoners and raised suspicions among his family, who have reportedly hired a pathologist to do an independent autopsy on the body. Graham Stewart executive director of the John Howard Society says "there are all sorts of allegiances within the system. I'm not saying they cannot do an effective job. It is not a question of whether they can do a review. It is whether they can do a review that is believable and acceptable." He also repeated calls by other prisoner advocates for the establishment of an outside agency to probe prison incidents. Outsiders need to be involved in prison probes to "assure the public that the system is not just defending itself". The prison service launched its internal probe after backtracking on a promise to secure a lead investigator from outside the prison service. Corrections spokesperson Sharon Hogan said the prison service was unwilling to delay the review any longer after two unidentified outsiders refused to take part. Hogan insisted the three Corrections employees will conduct a thorough, unbiased investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Robert Gentles. The Correctional Service does not have an unblemished record when it comes to in-house reviews into the use of force by guards during prison disturbances. This past summer, a Federal Court judge rejected as unfair and biased an internal review into the use of mace and firearms by guards during a 1986 melee at Collins Bay prison. No one died in that incident but the judge dismissed the Corrections report that cleared the guards of wrongdoing, suggesting that the report was written to justify the use of force. Police are investigating the Gentles death and it will be the subject of a coroner's inquest.

YOUNT bureau  
ANCHFIELD

The night an inmate was murdered in the regional jail, a guard falsified a report saying that he had personally checked each prisoner in his control, an inquest heard Monday.

That guard, Gerald Bisson, was fired but later got his job back when his union complained about his dismissal, the inquest was told.

A five-person coroner's jury is examining the April 1989 beating death of 27-year-old Michael Sienkiewicz at the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre.

The six thugs who beat him beyond recognition have been convicted of offences ranging from first-degree murder to assault causing bodily harm.

This four-day inquest is re-examining the death and trying to find ways to prevent future tragedies. And it is the

# Inmate killed at Edmonton penitentiary

EDMONTON (CP) — Prisoners were expected to be confined to their cells again today at the maximum security Edmonton Institution after a prisoner was stabbed to death on the weekend with a homemade pick.

1-year-old man

# Inmate dead after guards spray mace at him in cell

KINGSTON (CP) — An inmate at Kingston's Prison for Women says she helped a prisoner kill herself more than two years ago. "I took the cable and

inmate admits aiding suicide of prisoner at women's jail

## Death Behind Bars

An epidemic

2 Don jail guards cleared of beating prisoner during row

Two jail guards accused of beating up an inmate walked

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